

**Appropriations Committee
Public Hearing February 15, 2017**

**Testimony of Meredith Milligan
UConn School of Medicine, 3rd Year Student**

Re: UConn Health Budget

Good Evening,

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and members of the Committee, my name is Meredith Milligan and I am a third year medical student at the University of Connecticut. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak with you today.

Before I begin my testimony, I must confess that I love this state. I was born and raised in North Stonington, CT; graduated from the University of Connecticut, Storrs in 2014; and am currently studying medicine at the UConn School of Medicine in Farmington. Connecticut is my home, my classroom, and where I one day hope to practice. UConn has been at the center of these plans all along.

I chose to attend the UConn School of Medicine because I believed its values (of service, community engagement, and humanism in medicine) reflected my own. I have not been disappointed. As a member of the Urban Service Track sponsored by the CT Area Health Education Center (AHEC) at UConn Health, I have been lucky enough to learn and serve alongside colleagues from UConn's Schools of Dental Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Social Work and Quinnipiac University's Physician Assistant Program. I have participated in a curriculum specifically designed to produce healthcare professionals with an understanding of the needs of the underserved, an enthusiasm for the interdisciplinary healthcare team, and the leadership skills required to be a successful patient advocate. In times of uncertainty, when the most vulnerable among us seem ever-more marginalized, I have hope for the future, confidence in my colleagues, and faith in my own ability to make a difference because of the training I have received at UConn. I know that I am not alone in this.

While I understand the challenges you face in trying to balance the State budget, I am concerned that large budget cuts to the University of Connecticut and UConn Health will devalue the very programs that make us unique, the programs that capture student enthusiasm for our state and its diverse people, and the programs that will produce capable clinicians dedicated and prepared to care for and live in our communities. I urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts to UConn

Health. I am certain they would only be a step backwards for our University, for its students, and for our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Meredith Milligan